

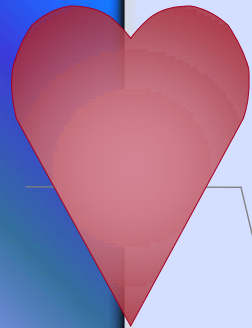
THE HEART

in Health Care Reform

Reflections on

**“A Faith-Inspired Vision of Health Care”
and Health Care Reform 2010**

Presented by Faithful Reform in Health Care



THE HEART

in Health Care Reform

**Reflections among people of faith
on how health care reform 2010 will
help build a system of health care
that works well for all of us.**

A Moral Vision

The starting point:



“A Faith-Inspired Vision of Health Care”

- ❑ An interfaith statement of values informed our thinking about health care reform throughout the process.
- ❑ A vision signed by nearly 100 faith organizations & thousands of individuals.

A Moral Vision

“A Faith-Inspired Vision of Health Care”

As people of faith, we envision a society where each person is afforded **health, wholeness, and human dignity.**

That vision embraces a system of health care that is...

- Inclusive
- Affordable
 - Accessible
 - Accountable



U.S. Health Care

Imagine... An old family homestead, assembled over 150 years... remodeled with a complex jumble of laws, policies, traditions, programs, practices, technologies, and bureaucracies... some of which were neither designed nor intended to work together.



U.S. Health Care

Imagine... Some in the family still find the house **comfortable**.

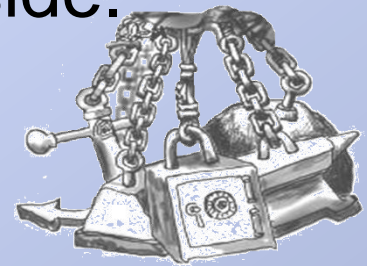
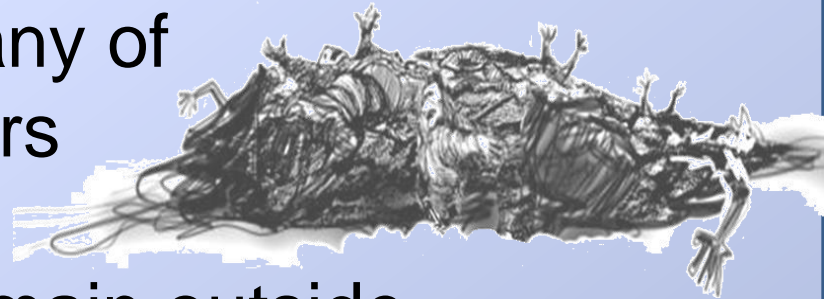
But others find it a **disgrace**; some feel **insecure** in it; some feel **unwelcome**; some have been **injured** in it; others have **no place** in it.



U.S. Health Care

This structure, U.S. health care...

- ❑ **Is expensive** & deteriorating
- ❑ **Causes harm** to many of the family members who call it home... and to those who remain outside.
- ❑ **Is deeply anchored** in our society, leaving us fearful of change, and worried about the impact of pulling up anchor.



Chronic Social Injustice

This structure is
an example of
chronic social injustice.

Injustice... relationships that are somehow out of balance and not aligned with deeply held shared values that affirm the common good.



Chronic Social Injustice

Social injustice penetrates the hearts, minds and imagination of our society, and is embedded in our language, symbols, laws, and institutions.

Chronic social injustice persists over a long period of time. It is deeply anchored in our culture; it is inherited. There is no single villain; there is no accountable reformer.



A new vision

The work to address such injustice begins in the **hearts and minds** of those who share a new vision of what it means to live in **right relationships** in a system that contributes to the common good.



A new vision

“A Faith-Inspired Vision of Health Care” offers that new vision. It is...

- A vision for our health care future based on the shared values from our sacred texts**
- A measure for legislative progress for moving us toward that vision.**

How did health care reform in 2010 measure up?



Health Care Reform 2010

Success!

For the first time ever in our decades of debate about health care reform in the U.S., bills were passed by:

- All 5 Congressional committees of jurisdiction
- Both chambers of Congress

... all with numerous amendments from both parties!



Health Care Reform 2010

Success!

- ❑ **On March 21st**, the House approved the Senate bill, getting over the last major hurdle.
- ❑ **On March 23rd**, the President signed the bill.



A Moral Vision

How far did we move toward our Vision of...

- inclusive
- affordable
- accessible
- accountable



HEALTH CARE FOR ALL?

Vision: Inclusive Health Care

Health care is a shared responsibility that is grounded in our common humanity.

In the bonds of our human family, we are **created to be equal**. We are guided by a divine will to treat each person with **dignity** and to live together as an **inclusive community**. Affirming our commitment to the **common good**, we acknowledge our enduring responsibility to **care for one another**. As we recognize that society is whole only when we care for the most vulnerable among us, we are led to discern the human right to **health care and wholeness**. Therefore, we are called to act with **compassion** by sharing our **abundant health care resources** with everyone.



Vision: Inclusive Health Care

1

After 100 years of debate, the federal government made a legislative commitment to include almost everyone in our health care system.

2

In plan years that begin after 9/23/10, qualifying young adults will be able to remain on their parents' dependent coverage until age 26 (with some eligible even earlier!).



Vision: Inclusive Health Care

3 Beginning this year, children cannot be excluded from coverage because of pre-existing conditions.

4 By 2014, no one can be excluded from coverage because of pre-existing conditions.

Vision: Inclusive Health Care

5 By 2014, Medicaid will be expanded to 133% of the federal poverty level to include those with the lowest incomes.

6 In 2014, insurance exchanges (marketplaces) will make affordable health care more inclusive for those who are experiencing life's transitions: change/loss of job, divorce, moves, etc.

Vision: Affordable Health Care

Health care must contribute to the common good by being affordable for individuals, families and society as a whole.

We believe that in the sacred act of creation we are endowed with the **talents, wisdom and abundant resources** necessary to meet the needs of one another, including the health care needs of all. Therefore, in our calling to be **faithful stewards**, we understand our **responsibility** to use our health care resources **effectively**, to administer them **efficiently**, and to distribute them with **equity**.





Vision: Affordable Health Care

1

This year, many small businesses (including non-profits) will receive tax credits to help them purchase insurance for their employees.

2

This year, persons who have been uninsured for 6 months because of pre-existing conditions may purchase insurance in a new national high-risk pool.

Vision: Affordable Health Care

3

This year, senior adults who reach the gap (doughnut hole) in their Medicare prescription drug coverage will be entitled to a \$250 rebate.

4

Next year, generous discounts will be available for drugs purchased in the doughnut hole, leading to the gap being eliminated in ten years.



Vision: Affordable Health Care

5

In 2014, exchanges (marketplaces) will be established where individuals and small businesses may purchase affordable insurance.

6

In 2014, premium & cost-sharing subsidies will be provided to help persons up to 400% of the federal poverty level purchase insurance.

Vision: Accessible Health Care

All persons should have access to health services that provide necessary care and contribute to wellness.

We believe **humanity is sacred** and that all persons should benefit from those actions which contribute to our health and wholeness. Therefore, we are called to act with **justice and love**, to ensure that all of us have access to the health care we need in order to live out the **fullness of our potential** both as individuals and as contributing members of our society. We must work together to identify and **overcome all barriers** to and disparities in such care.



Vision: Accessible Health Care

1

Standard benefits will be defined for all health plans in the exchanges, as well as new plans, including services often excluded from coverage:

- mental & behavioral health
- rehabilitation
- prevention & wellness
- maternity & new born
- chronic disease management
- prescription drugs
- and more!



Vision: Accessible Health Care

2 Incentives in medical education are designed to increase the number of primary care physicians and nurses.

3 A new national insurance program is established to provide financial assistance for the elderly and persons with disabilities who wish to remain in their homes and communities.



Vision: Accessible Health Care

4

Increased funding for community health centers will nearly double the number of persons who receive health care in under-served areas.

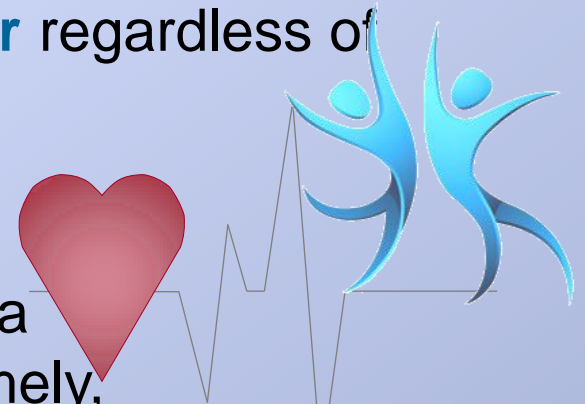
5

To reduce disparities in access to & delivery of health care, attention will be given to increasing the racial & ethnic diversity & cultural competency of medical professionals.

Vision: Accountable Health Care

Our health care system must be accountable, offering a quality, equitable and sustainable means of keeping us healthy as individuals and as a community.

We believe that as spiritual and sacred vessels, we are responsible for the **care of our bodies** to the best of our ability and for the **care of one another** regardless of individual circumstances. Therefore, individuals, families, governments, businesses, and the faith community are called to **work in partnership** for a system that ensures fully-informed, timely, **quality and safe care** that treats **body, mind and spirit**.





Vision: Accountable Health Care

- 1 New standards are set for the % of premiums (medical loss ratio) that insurers must spend on medical care, rather than on excess paperwork, profit, and advertising.
- 2 More employers will share responsibility in providing insurance for their workers.
- 3 Attention will be given to payments based on improved outcomes, rather than on quantity of services.

Vision: Accountable Health Care

- 4 Individuals will share responsibility for their health care by contributing a fair share & by placing an emphasis on wellness, prevention & self-care.
- 5 Members of Congress & their staff will purchase their insurance in the same exchanges as millions of Americans & small businesses.
- 6 New practices will address quality, waste, fraud, abuse & errors within the delivery of health care.



Challenges to justice

What didn't we get?

- Where does the new law fall short of our Vision?
- What challenges to justice remain?
- What still needs to be done?

Challenges to justice

To answer those questions, we are reminded of the need to measure our progress against the age-old “moral test” of a society:

How did we treat:

- Those who are in the dawn of life
 - the children?
- Those who are in the twilight of life
 - the elderly?
- Those who are in the shadow of life
 - the sick, needy, or differently-abled?

Challenges to justice

Justice questions to guide our thinking:

- Who is included? Who is still excluded?
- Who pays? Who profits? Who profits at the expense of those who cannot pay?
- Whose voices are/were heard? Whose are/were not?
- Who is accountable? And to whom?

Challenges to justice

Where the bill falls short of our Vision

Vision: Inclusive Health Care

1

Some children will remain uninsured because of the way their states administer the Children's Health Insurance Program.

2

Some persons will qualify for Medicaid but barriers to enrollment may discourage their participation.

Challenges to justice

Where the bill falls short of our Vision

Vision: Inclusive Health Care

- 3 Legal immigrants who work, pay taxes & contribute to society are barred from Medicaid for 5 years; undocumented persons cannot purchase insurance in the exchange with even their own funds

Challenges to justice

Where the bill falls short of our Vision

Vision: Affordable Health Care

1

In the absence of a public option, or comparable alternative, there is no guarantee of affordable premiums.

2

Pharmaceutical industry support was contingent upon protecting their patents & prohibiting competition with the purchase of imported drugs.

Challenges to justice

Where the bill falls short of our Vision

Vision: Accessible Health Care

1

Excessive documentation, meant to exclude undocumented immigrants, will create barriers for some citizens, as well: rural populations, persons born at home, those who never received a birth certificate; those displaced by natural disasters; and mixed-status families.

Challenges to justice

Where the bill falls short of our Vision

Vision: Accessible Health Care

2


Raising Medicaid eligibility does not automatically guarantee access to medical professionals; low levels of reimbursement to Medicaid & Medicare providers can result in some refusing to accept Medicaid or Medicare patients.

Challenges to justice

Where the bill falls short of our Vision

Vision: Accountable Health Care

- 1 We still have no assurances that we'll be able to control costs among the for-profit stakeholders.
- 2 Industry & provider lobbies still have undue access to and power over legislators and regulators.




The path forward

Legislative progress that may change how we think about our health care future

Principle of universality:

IOM Report of 2004 – Universal health coverage will only be achieved when the principle of universality is embodied in federal public policy.




The path forward

Legislative progress that may change how we think about our health care future

Greater shared responsibility:

All of us – individuals, institutions, business, government – will share greater responsibility for making the system work for all of us.



The path forward

Legislative progress that may change how we think about our health care future

Greater accountability:

All of us will be held accountable – individuals for self-care & insurance; insurers for how they spend their money; providers for quality; gov't for regulation & oversight.

What else needs to be said?

We still need:

- 1 A shared vision that providing needed health care is first and foremost a people issue – and a moral imperative.
- 2 The ability to transcend partisanship and to dialogue around shared values on behalf of the common good.



A Moral Vision for Our Future

“A Faith-Inspired Vision of Health Care”

Yes, our current discussion on health care is about how we design a health care future that includes everyone and works well for all of us – and the faith community’s role in making that happen.

But just as important...

A Moral Vision for Our Future

“A Faith-Inspired Vision of Health Care”

But just as important is the role of shaping our **public conscience** – thus transforming the way we respond to the common good.

It is about the **soul of our nation** & our ability to **demonstrate our concern** for our brothers & sisters in our national community.

A Moral Vision for Health Care

What to do... what to do...

Short-term:

- ❑ Continued outreach to Congress... calls, letters, vigils, etc.
- ❑ Be a part of the “truth squad” through education & conversation.
- ❑ Commit to being engaged for the long-term.

A Moral Vision for Health Care

What to do... what to do...

Long-term:

- ❑ Participate in education, dialogue, & advocacy around implementation, improvements, & state reforms
- ❑ Help resist repeal & other opposition efforts

A Moral Vision for Health Care

What to do... what to do...

Long-term:

- ❑ Discern what faith values (not political ideology or economic self-interests) inform your thinking about this issue.
- ❑ Be a part of the transformation that faithfully answers the question:

Am I my brothers'/sister's keeper?



For more information

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